

WIPP Quick Facts (As of 4-28-13)

11,241

Shipments received since opening
(10,592 CH and 649 RH)

86,337

Cubic meters of waste disposed
(86,013 CH and 324 RH)

166,243

Containers disposed in the
underground
(165,597 CH and 646 RH)

Public invited to comment on Class 2 Permit Modification Request

DOE and NWP have proposed a modification to the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit to modify the prohibition of "excluded waste". Excluded waste is transuranic (TRU) waste that has been managed as high-level waste and waste from specific tanks currently identified in the Permit. In some instances, TRU waste tanks were located in the same tank farm that stored high-level waste and were managed with the same radioactive waste management practices.

The disposal of high-level waste at WIPP is prohibited by the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act. The change to permit will not affect what type of waste can be disposed at WIPP, as all waste must meet the law and the project's strict waste acceptance criteria.

Public meetings for this Class 2 permit modification request are scheduled for May 14 in Santa Fe, NM and May 16 in Carlsbad, NM.

To read a copy of the proposed change or for more information on how to submit comments, see the [Submitted Modifications/Request for Comments](#) section on the WIPP

WIPP submits Class 3 permit modification request



On March 18, 2013, the U.S. Department of Energy Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC (NWP), referred to as the Permittees, submitted a Class 3 permit modification request package to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). This package consists of three major modification requests to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Hazardous Waste Facility Permit.

Panel Closure System

The first request would modify the WIPP panel closure system design. Currently, the Permittees are required to install a 12-foot thick isolation wall, followed by a 26-foot thick monolith of Salado Mass Concrete (solid concrete wall). The revised proposal would require a steel bulkhead to be installed (or use the existing block walls in Panels 1, 2 and 5) in the access drifts on the waste disposal side, followed by filling the access drifts with a minimum of 100-feet of mined salt and then another steel bulkhead. The panel closure with the mined salt will comply with the same performance standards for protection as the block wall and concrete monolith, however it is easier to install, provides a higher certainty of successful installation and is less impactful to facility operations.

Repository Reconfiguration

The second request will reconfigure the locations of Panels 9 and 10 in the WIPP underground disposal area with the new locations to be designated as Panels 9A and 10A. The current configuration consists of eight disposal panels with four on each side of the main access drifts used for ventilation and transport of waste (i.e., on each side of the mine). After filling Panels 1 through 8 with TRU waste, the main access drifts between Panels 1 through 8 would be enlarged and used as Panels 9 and 10 for TRU waste disposal. The Permittees are asking that the configuration be changed to allow new Panels 9A and 10A to be constructed on the south side of Panels 4 and 5 respectively, meaning there would be a total of five panels on each side of the mine (see graphic below). This reconfiguration will not change the total waste volume destined for the WIPP facility, it will simply change where the TRU waste will be disposed of in the underground. This change will enhance worker safety and will reduce the maintenance requirements by providing a more stable area in the underground for TRU waste emplacement.



WIPP managers roll up their sleeves for community

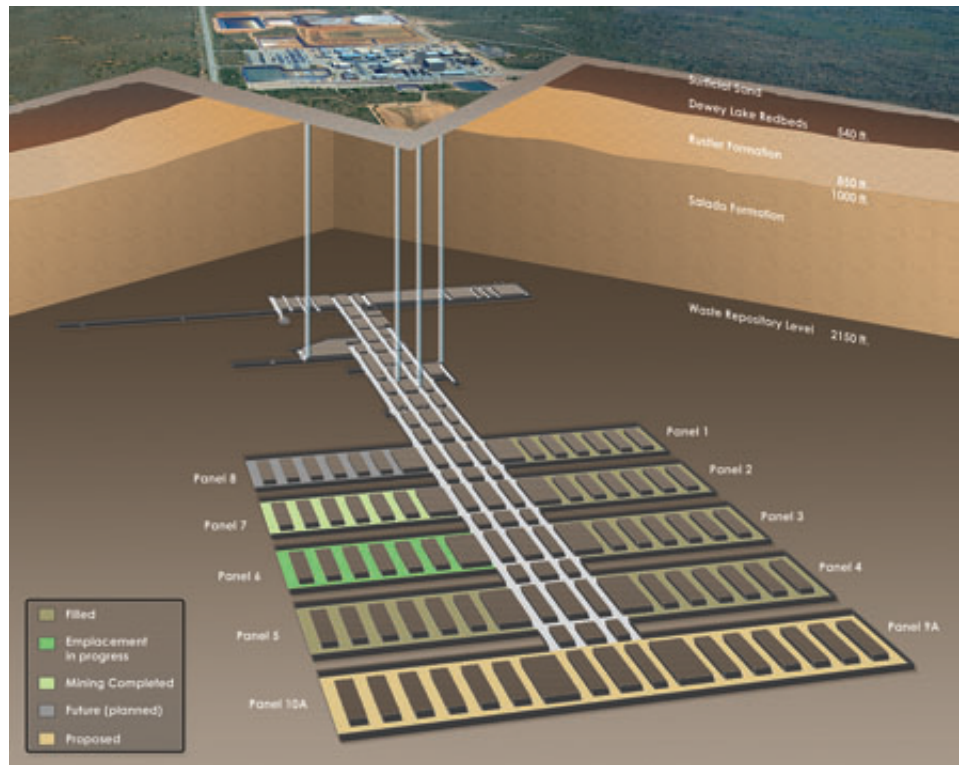
Senior managers from Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant management and operating contractor, recently spent their Saturday at the Riverwalk Recreation Center in Carlsbad, NM, but it wasn't all fun and games. In fact, they had their sleeves rolled up and went to work updating the fitness room, which has been in need of work for about three years.

Central Characterization Program Manager Tammy Reynolds organized the service project as a way to help the community. She said the facility serves so many people in varied age groups that it was a great way to do more than just hand over a check. Her goal was to give something tangible to the community.

"The Rec Center's staff was so appreciative and helpful," said Reynolds. "They had all the materials for the job, but needed people to do the work, so that's where we came in."

The team of volunteers prepped surfaces, filled holes, painted walls, trimmed a door and resurfaced the floor. The finished product turned out well and the fitness room is back in use.

Above, part of the team checking supplies for the project. Left to right: Reynolds' husband Guy Girard, Chief Financial Officer Rob Gifford, Operations Manager Scott Kennedy and Reynolds. Below, the main area of the fitness room at the end of the day.



VOC Monitoring Program

The final part of this permit modification will revise the volatile organic compound (VOC) target analyte list, as well as other changes to the VOC monitoring program. The VOC target analyte list identifies which VOC's must be measured and identified in air samples taken from the WIPP underground. New information based on over 136,000 samples and years of data from the underground have made these changes necessary to provide continued protection to human health and the environment. This information has shown the source terms have changed and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has revised some of the associated risk factors related to specific VOC's. Additionally, the frequency of samples would change from twice to once weekly, the sample would be based on a 24-hour period and results would be reported to NMED annually instead of semi-annually.

Public meetings were conducted on this proposed permit modification request on April 16 and 18 in Santa Fe and Carlsbad, respectively. Pictured above, Anthony Stone of CBFO (seated at table) and Bob Kehrman of URS Regulatory and Environmental Services provide information at the April 18 public meeting in Carlsbad.

Public Comment Opportunity

Public comments may be submitted to NMED at the address below and must be received no later than 5 p.m. on May 20, 2013.

Ms. Trais Kliphuis
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505
E-mail: trais.kliphuis@state.nm.us

The permit modification request can be viewed on the WIPP Home Page at <http://www.wipp.energy.gov>.



DOE officials visit WIPP



Peter Maggiore, assistant manager for Environmental Operations at the National Nuclear Security Administration's Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Field Office (left), and Jeffrey Mousseau, LANL associate director (right), were recently underground at WIPP with Carlsbad Field Office Manager Joe Franco (center). CBFO and LANL are working together to meet the LANL Framework Agreement with the state of New Mexico to dispose of 3,706 cubic meters of transuranic waste stored above ground at LANL by June 2014. Of note, Maggiore was also at WIPP 14 years ago this month for the WIPP Grand Opening. At the time WIPP opened in 1999, he served as Secretary of the New Mexico Environment Department.



Student landscaping project promotes environmental conservation

A xeriscaping project at a local Carlsbad, NM school has a unique tie to the 250-million-year-old salt formation that is home to the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The project was funded through the WIPP Salt Tailings Project, a 2009 multiparty agreement among DOE, Magnum Minerals LLC, of Hereford, Texas and the Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District.

What is xeriscaping?

Xeriscaping is a landscape design that uses drought resistant native plants and grasses.

The agreement called for DOE to make 300,000 tons of mined salt from WIPP available to Magnum Minerals. The Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District, which administers the contract, uses the proceeds for conservation projects in southeast New Mexico, including community environmental education, outreach programs and events.

The xeriscaping project at Jefferson Montessori Academy was designed by student Remington Maravilla. It features a low-water-use sensory garden with a pathway and low-water-use plants, along with a windbreak on the western property boundary. Other low-water-use plants were installed at various locations throughout the school campus.

Students, with assistance from the Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District staff, installed the landscape. The three students pictured above in the xeriscaped area from front to back are Michelle Wood, Jaslyn Harkness and Remington Maravilla.



The U.S. Department of Energy Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

To be added to the TRU TeamWorks update notification list or to submit comments or suggestions, please contact us at TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws.

